

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of ERIKA MARIE PARIS BARNES,
a Minor.

FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

CHERISE WOODWARD,

Respondent-Appellant.

and

PHIL BARNES

Respondent

UNPUBLISHED
December 26, 2000

No. 224606
Wayne Circuit Court
Family Division
LC No. 96-339651

Before: Doctoroff, PJ, Cavanagh and Meter, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent Cherise Woodward appeals as of right from an order of the Wayne Circuit Court, Family Division, terminating her parental rights to her child Erika Marie Paris Barnes (born 3/7/96), pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g), and (j); MSA 27.3178(598.19b)(3)(c)(i), (g), and (j).¹ We affirm.

We review a family court's decision to terminate parental rights for clear error. MCR 5.974(I); *In re Trejo Minors*, 462 Mich 341, 356; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). If a family court determines that the petitioner has proven by clear and convincing evidence one or more statutory grounds for termination, the court must terminate parental rights unless there exists clear

¹ The court also terminated the parental rights of the child's putative father, Phil Barnes. He has not appealed the termination.

evidence, on the whole record, that termination is not in the child's best interests. MCL 712A.19b(5); MSA 27.3178(598.19b)(5); *Trejo, supra* at 351-354.

We disagree with respondent's argument that the trial court erred when it found that one or more grounds for termination were established by clear and convincing evidence. The record shows that respondent's neglect that led to the child becoming a ward of the court in 1996 still existed at the time the court terminated parental rights in 1999. In addition, there was no evidence in the record indicating that respondent's continuing neglect would be rectified within a reasonable time. MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i); MSA 27.3178(598.19b)(3)(c)(i). Further, respondent does not argue that termination was contrary to the child's best interests. MCL 712A.19b(5); MSA 27.3178(598.19b)(5) We conclude that the trial court did not clearly err when it found that one or more grounds for termination were established by clear and convincing evidence, and termination was not against the best interests of the child. *Trejo, supra*.

Respondent also argues that the court failed to cite the appropriate authority for termination of her parental rights. Respondent failed to brief this issue in her appeal. An appellant may not merely announce a position and leave it to this Court to discover and rationalize the basis for the claim. *In re Toler*, 193 Mich App 474, 477; 484 NW2d 672 (1992). Furthermore, respondent's argument is without merit.

Affirmed.

/s/ Martin M. Doctoroff

/s/ Mark J. Cavanagh

/s/ Patrick M. Meter